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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you as a concerned consumer, as well as an informed student in the School of Public Health (nutrition division) at UC Berkeley. On behalf of my statements regarding the labeling of irradiated food, I will be referring to Docket #98N-1038. Please consider my sincere opinion in up-coming discussions.

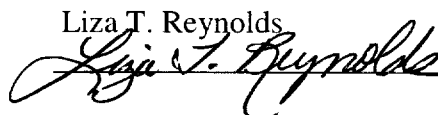
After tracking both sides of the issue, I have well-founded concerns about the safety (and necessity) of irradiated foods. I am a strong proponent of organic, whole foods that have not been subject to humankind's selfish desires to correct and perfect nature, or to maximize profits by exploiting animals and gullible consumers.

If irradiated foods are allowed to enter the marketplace with frequency, I strongly ask the following: 1) that there be prominent, easily identifiable labels indicating that foods have been irradiated, including a label stating potential long-term or dubious effects; and 2) that the requirement for irradiation disclosure—both the label and radura symbol—not be allowed to expire at any time in the future.

It would be manipulative to obfuscate the true "language of irradiation" with terms such as "electronic" or "cold pasteurization." Likewise, it would be negligent not to label irradiated foods at all, ignoring research on radiation hazards and drawbacks. Just for a moment, think about what you would want as an average consumer, and remember that most people are not sufficiently informed to decipher fancy marketing strategies or scientific terms, nor do they have time to dissect fine print on labels.

Whether or not people end up buying irradiated foods (because they are simply available on the shelves, or not labeled with proper warning signs), the truth remains that 77% of consumers in 1997 reported that they were opposed to radiation. Once irradiated products are on the market, powerful influencing factors (such as marketing and advertising) will negate people's choice to have naturally healthy, wholesome foods and will create the façade that a true market demand for irradiated food exists when it does not.

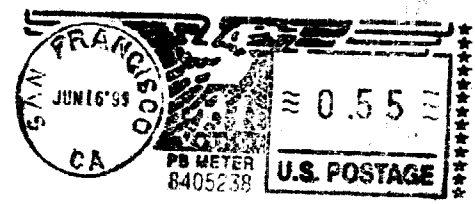
Thank you,

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